

# Local Churches Plan Union Good Friday Services

# Foes Hit Plan to Shift Civic Center to New Site

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**HAPPY HOMECOMING . . .** Six-year-old Billy Hiatt is mighty glad to have "Zinnia" back home. The lad's nightly prayers and a story in Sunday's Torrance Herald was the combination that led to the recovery of the stolen pony.

### A Hero's Homecoming

## News Story Leads to Recovery Of Lad's Pet Pony 'Zinnia'

The nightly prayers of six-year-old Billy Hiatt have been answered.

The six-year-old boy's pet pony, "Zinnia," has been found and returned to its corral at Billy's home, 21502 Berendo Ave. It was less than two hours after last Sunday's Torrance Herald "hit the streets" with a picture of Billy kneeling at his bedside praying for the return of his missing Shetland pony that two young boys knocked on the Hiatts' door.

#### Pony Spotted

"We seen your pony tied up in some kid's backyard over there," one of the boys waved a finger in a northerly direction.

William Hiatt, Billy's father, followed the boys to a lot several blocks away. There stood "Zinnia," lean and unfed. Its mane had been clipped and someone had tried to clip away the distinguishing white hair on its chest.

#### Hero's Return

Back at the Hiatt household "Zinnia" received a hero's return from seven other children who are cared for by Mrs. Hiatt. The children are those from the broken homes, wards of the court, all being raised by the Hiatts as their own. "Zinnia" was the idol of their young lives. There was a "welcome home" party, a reward for the two boys, and an even greater reward for Mrs. Hiatt. "Billy was so sure his prayers would be answered that I dreaded the day I would have to explain why 'Zinnia' didn't come back," she sighed.

### Paul Diamond Named HAEC Vice-President

Paul Diamond, owner of the local Gay Shop, has been elected first vice-president of the Harbor Area Employers' Council, according to Frank S. Selover, executive secretary.

A. J. Moe of San Pedro, E. W. Spear, and J. N. Blake of Gardena are the new second, third and fourth vice-presidents of the group. Election of the leaders followed a recent revision of the council by-laws.



(Herald Photo)

**ORIENTAL SONGBIRD . . .** Vivacious Chiemi Eri, popular recording star and motion picture actress of Japan, thrilled a packed house at the Grand Theater here Tuesday evening with her interpretations of native and American songs. The 16-year-old songstress has been a popular entertainer for American GIs throughout Japan.

### Anti-Aircraft Battery Loses Amateur Status

Making like ack-ack gunners with .22-caliber rifles has brought a couple of teen-age boys into conflict with the forces of law and order.

Nabbed earlier this week by a sheriff's deputy were two boys, ages 14 and 15, who are accused of firing rifles at low-flying aircraft at the Torrance Municipal Airport.

A check of planes on the field by authorities at the airport has turned up no signs of damage—testifying to the apparent bad aim of the youthful pair.

Deputy M. L. Kullman said he found the two boys firing rifles toward a plane landing at the field. Base of operations for the anti-aircraft battery was described as an abandoned convertible auto parked in the West Lomita area. The boys face a hearing in juvenile court.

### Wife Attempts Suicide As Cops Arrest Husband

An 18-year-old mother-to-be attempted suicide by swallowing an overdose of Anacin pills late yesterday afternoon as police officers arrived to arrest her 20-year-old husband on a bad check charge.

Arrested by Torrance and Redondo Beach police officers was Ronald D. Skaggs, 32, of 130 Paseo de Gracia, attempted to turn onto Hwy. 101 at Paseo de las Delicias. He was uninjured, according to the report filed by Sgt. John Maestri of the Torrance Police Department.

The accident occurred as Ronald D. Skaggs, 32, of 130 Paseo de Gracia, attempted to turn onto Hwy. 101 at Paseo de las Delicias. He was uninjured, according to the report filed by Sgt. John Maestri of the Torrance Police Department.



**A REMINDER TO PRAY . . .** Members of the Torrance post of the VFW planted a tree at Plaza del Amo and Arlington Sunday as a reminder to "Pause and Pray for World Peace." Mayor Mervin M. Schwab, with shovel, accepted the tree on behalf of the city.



**PINNED DOWN . . .** When he attempted to pull another tractor out of deep mire, Joe O. Cook, 36, of 5450 Torrance Blvd., was severely injured last Monday when his own tractor flipped end for end over on its back pinning him beneath the wheel (arrow). Suffering a double break of his right leg, the injured man had to be dug from beneath the overturned tractor as an auto wrecker held it from tumbling even further onto the injured man. The mishap occurred on a farm on Henrietta St. south of Torrance Blvd. Tractor at left bogged down when it hit a soft hole caused by a leaking underground water line. The injured man was taken to Harbor General Hospital.

### Man Hurlled Over Front Seat, Out Car's Rear Door

So forceful was the impact of a collision yesterday morning that the driver of one of the cars was hurled over the front seat and out the rear door and onto the pavement.

Yet, the only injury sustained by Joe Frosey Boaccio of San Pedro, was a cut over one eye. He was taken by a passing motorist to the Family Medical Group in Redondo Beach for treatment.

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### Alter Drama in Sky

## Friend Defends Suicide Pilot

What would cause a Purple Heart veteran, a war hero who many times faced death at the hands of the enemy, suddenly decide to end his life by crashing a stolen plane into the sea?

What happened to Roland Sperry, an ideal husband, a father, and a hard-working salesman to cause him, last Friday, to decide to take the "easy way out"?

What went wrong in the life of this Torrance veteran pilot that would make him want to throw in the sponge?

What was it that he had too much of—what was it that he couldn't take any more?

The Herald editors sent Reporter Mary Hall to find out. He talked with Roland Sperry's closest friends to find the answers. Here is Roland Sperry's story:

### BY MARY HALL

Roland Sperry's story is strange in many ways. It is the story, actually, of two separate lives, one good, one not so good. First, let's look at the "good" Roland Sperry.

The good in Roland Sperry is brought out by his war record. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1943, and according to his best friend, Bill Eytchison, who told us his story, he was a model airman.

He served with the Flying Tigers and took part in the China Burma India campaigns. His list of medals for meritorious service includes two Bronze Stars, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Good Conduct Medal, the Air Medal, and a Purple Heart.

While serving as a tail gunner, a shell blew up in his cockpit and a six-inch piece of shrapnel lodged in his head. For five months he lay between life and death in an Army hospital. He recovered and received a medical discharge on Oct. 27, 1945. A silver plate in his skull is a constant reminder of the accuracy of enemy gunners.

"Sperry was a model husband," Eytchison told us. "He was married for 12 years, had three children. He worked day and night to buy a home." While working in Eytchison's father's furniture store, he was "One of the world's best salesmen," young Eytchison said. "Then I opened a store of my own. Sperry worked for me. One time I went on a business trip and put him in charge of the store. It was gone longer than I expected to be, but Sperry kept the store running. He deposited the money in the bank, paid the bills—in fact, if it hadn't been for him I wouldn't have a store now."

At one time he was employed as a salesman in the El Prado Furniture Store here.



**AIRMAN SPERRY . . .** Trouble in the Air

### 100 Businessmen Property Owners Sign Protest

Strong objection to the city's plan to relocate the civic center on a 30-acre tract near Torrance Blvd. and Madrona Ave. was voiced this week by more than 100 businessmen and property owners of the present business section.

Being circulated this week were petitions protesting recent City Council action which instructed the city manager to proceed with the negotiations for the purchase of the land for \$120,000.

Pioneered District The petition stated that the signers had pioneered the present business district and that they should be consulted if the council contemplated moving the civic center. The signers asked for a meeting with the City Council to discuss the matter.

Signers of the petition indicated they were not in favor of the move because it was unnecessary to shift the location of the present city hall and other municipal offices now located in the central business district and that a move would be injurious to the present businesses and property owners.

On Agenda A spokesman for the businessmen stated they would present the signed petitions to the City Council so that it would be on the agenda of the next meeting scheduled for April 14.

Earlier, George W. Stevens, the city manager, said that if the city was to use foresight in looking to the time that Torrance would be a city of 100,000, it should act now to buy improved property for free-way rights of way than it does to buy vacant or unimproved land.

"The need for the new civic center" is not immediate, and yet "in 'years and years' away. But it was going to get the land we should take action to get it now," he said.

"As the city grows so will the staff of city workers. With these new workers employed within the central business district it is apparent that the parking problem will be intensified many times what it is at present."

The plan of the city is to purchase land for future development a city hall, a major park, and perhaps a municipal swimming pool, on a 30-acre tract north of Torrance Blvd. between Madrona and Maple Aves.

### Adult Center Plans Party

A housewarming party will be held tomorrow night at 7:30 to celebrate the opening of the Adult Recreation Center which was partially destroyed by fire a few months ago.

The center has been newly rebuilt and refurbished, and is ready to go, according to H. M. Haynes, chairman of the committee in charge of tomorrow evening's program. Refreshments will be served at the get-together and celebrants will be entertained by local talent, Haynes said.

Other members on Haynes' committee are Chris Taylor, Daniels, and Armour Taylor. In the future, a get-together similar to the one planned for tomorrow night will be held every month, Haynes said.

## Churches Unite for Good Friday Rites

Union Good Friday services will be held at the First Methodist Church, Carson and Manuel, tomorrow afternoon from 1 to 2 p.m. It was announced yesterday. Rev. Arthur E. Bello, rector of the St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, will be in charge of the service.

Tomorrow's services will be sponsored by the Torrance Council of Churches. Pastors of several of the city's churches will participate in the annual observance of Good Friday.

Choirs of the Episcopal and Lutheran churches will provide choral music and sing for the offertory. The complete program of the hour-long service follows.

- Organ Prelude
- Processional Hymn . . . . . Crown Him With Many Crowns
  - Call to Worship . . . . . Rev. Arthur E. Bello
  - Invocation . . . . . Rev. C. Miles Northrup
  - Responsive . . . . . Rev. Homer H. Miller
  - Congregational Hymn . . . . . In Cross of Christ I Glorify
  - Selected Scripture . . . . . Rev. Paul Wonske
  - Call to Prayer and Meditation . . . . . Rev. Cecil England
  - Offertory Sentences . . . . . Rev. Arthur E. Bello
  - Anthem . . . . . Where You There When They Crucified My Lord
  - Sermon (Based on Seven Last Words) . . . . . Rev. John L. Taylor
  - Recessional Hymn . . . . . Lead On O King Eternal
  - Benediction . . . . . Rev. Arthur E. Bello